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Keeping the promise: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 63/150 and 64/131, by which the Assembly requested a comprehensive biennial review on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and progress and challenges concerning the advancement of persons with disabilities in the context of development and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. It consists of the introduction and five sections: section II contains the background to promoting the inclusion of disability in the Goals, including the implications of the global crises for persons with disabilities; section III examines the status of inclusion of disability and persons with disabilities concerning: (a) the ongoing Millennium Development Goal processes; (b) progress and challenges; and (c) monitoring and evaluation and Millennium Development Goal indicators; section IV outlines the options for updating the World Programme; and section V contains the overview of the current status of disability data and statistics. The report provides recommendations to advance disability-inclusive Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals by Member States and other stakeholders based on: (a) the international normative framework on disability, including the World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention; (b) the existing Millennium Development Goal framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and (c) the strengthened disability statistics for monitoring and evaluation of progress made in (a) and (b). The annexes provide further technical information as background in support of the recommendations: (a) options for updates of the World Programme of Action; and (b) future development and use of disability statistics in support of inclusive monitoring and evaluation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

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I. Introduction

1. The Millennium Development Goals, drawn from the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000, call on all stakeholders to take action towards achieving eight key developmental goals by 2015. The goals focus on reducing extreme poverty, improving health and education and environmental sustainability to improve the lives of the world's poorest populations. The Goals are also an expression of fundamental human rights, encompassing universally accepted human values and rights for all.

2. The commitment of the United Nations to the rights of persons with disabilities since its inception has been codified into an international human rights convention in 2006. The newly adopted Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, together with the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, provides for a strengthened international normative framework for disability-inclusive[1] development. It has provided an impetus and unique platform from which to engage the broader global development community.

3. The General Assembly, through its resolutions 63/150 and 64/131, reiterated the commitment of the international community to promote the inclusion of disability in Millennium Development Goal processes and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities as development agents and beneficiaries.

4. The fifth review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons as well as the desk review of the Millennium Development Goals country reports (see A/64/180, chap. II.A) provided a mixed picture suggesting some progress in mainstreaming disability in development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, but also raised concerns that disability remains largely "invisible" in the national development priorities.

5. The present report highlights the urgent need for integrating the disability perspective in the Millennium Development Goals at this critical juncture in 2010. The report also recommends action to set the remaining course of the Millennium Development Goals as well as other internationally agreed development goals to continue collective efforts beyond 2015. The present report is submitted as the international community prepares for the 2010 United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, which promises to signify the importance of inclusive Goals and further recognize the need for persons with disabilities to be an integral part of all Millennium Development Goal processes.

II. Background to the Millennium Development Goals and disability: multiple crises of the current global situation and persons with disabilities

6. The past few years have witnessed a series of unprecedented global crises, including global financial and economic crisis, food and energy crises and climate

[1] "Disability-inclusive" development in the present report refers to development policies, programmes and activities that are inclusive of all stakeholders and disability-responsive in their design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

change, in addition to increasing conflicts and humanitarian crisis such as the recent earthquake in Haiti. These multiple crises have rolled back gains and have the potential to create obstacles to achieving development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (see A/64/665, sect. II.B), with serious implications for persons with disabilities.

A. Impact of multiple crises on persons with disabilities

7. The economic downturn has had devastating effects on the lives of many in both developed and developing countries. According to a recent study, the pace of recovery is slow and uneven across countries, especially in developing economies, and the recovery will be insufficient to achieve meaningful improvements in social conditions in most countries.[2] Any possible decrease in public spending could further exacerbate the situation of persons with disabilities who already experience inadequate access to social services, particularly in developing countries.

8. As a result of the global food crisis, an additional 105 million people were pushed into poverty, according to the World Bank estimates,[3] demonstrating that hunger is more a problem of "poverty" than of food availability. During a food crisis, the general vulnerability to disability tends to increase:[4] malnourished mothers are more likely to give birth to children with disabilities, and malnourished children are more likely to acquire an impairment that could develop into a disability. The food/energy crises have posed new challenges for the marginalized, including persons with disabilities, by further limiting their access to nutrition, heating and electricity.

9. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), a total of 98 per cent of the 211 million people affected by natural disasters annually were in developing countries. In the wake of the devastating earthquake in Haiti, approximately 300,000 people were estimated to have been injured, many of whom would likely live with long-term disabilities.[5] Similarly, the persons with disabilities are often among the most vulnerable to natural and human-made hazards,[6] as is evident from reports on how persons with disabilities were not evacuated with the others in the rush to escape tides and winds when cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar in May 2008.[7]

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[2] United Nations, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2010: Update as of mid-2010* (New York, May 2010).

[3] World Bank, *Double Jeopardy: Responding to High Food and Fuel Prices*. The Group of Eight Hokkaido-Tokyo Summit (Tokyo, 2008).

[4] Available from: http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/index_emergencies.html.

[5] The Global Partnership for Disability and Development, the World Bank and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs co-organized a panel discussion on "Haiti: reconstruction for all", during the International Donors' Conference for Haiti, United Nations Headquarters, 31 March 2010, in collaboration with the Government of Canada and Disabled Peoples' International. Further information is available at http://gpdd-online.org/events/docs/Haiti_Side_Event.doc.

[6] United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), *Global Report on Human Settlements 2007: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security* (United Kingdom and United States, Earthscan, 2007), chap. I.

[7] Global Partnership for Disability and Development and the World Bank, "The impact of climate change on people with disabilities" (2009).

10. There are more conflicts in the world today than ever before, and wars tend to last longer.[8] Conflict is a major cause of physical disabilities, and the trauma of war causes mental and emotional disturbances: Afghanistan has experienced 20 years of war, which left many disabled.[8] Persons with disabilities are often made invisible by society and this can be lethal in a situation of war: in the aftermath of a conflict, persons with disabilities may find their situation exacerbated by the loss of caretakers, and the lack of accessible housing, aids and accessible food, water, sanitation, information and communications technology and infrastructure.[9]

B. Addressing the challenges

11. Against the backdrop of multiple global crises and emerging challenges, Governments, along with the development community, have responded in various ways through taking specific policy measures, and new initiatives. The challenge is to fully take into account the situations of persons with disabilities and to incorporate their needs and concerns into crisis-related adjustments to make responses available to everyone.

12. In response to the global financial crisis, economic stimulus packages have been put in place in different countries to generate employment, provide diverse income support and increase expenditure on social services. Whereas these packages aim to be ostensibly "pro-poor", it remains uncertain to what extent they have been able to address and incorporate the needs of persons with disabilities who live in poverty.

13. During the humanitarian crisis or conflict, persons with disabilities tend to remain invisible and therefore often excluded from relief efforts.[10] It is crucial to ensure equal access to water and nutrition for all persons with disabilities, while making strategic arrangements to reach out to persons with mobility-related disabilities. The United Nations *World Public Sector Report 2010* highlights the importance of including all populations, including persons with disabilities, in every aspect of socio-politico-economic development efforts in post-conflict situations.[11]

14. As planning for major reconstruction gets under way in many post-disaster countries, the situation of persons with disabilities and their needs should be included at the very beginning of planning, designing and building permanent shelters, schools, health clinics and other buildings to ensure accessibility to all. It is more cost-effective to design a barrier-free building than to renovate an existing building to make it fully accessible to persons with disabilities.[12]

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[8] "Conflict and CBR", *CBR News*, the international newsletter on the community-based rehabilitation and the concerns of disabled people, No. 32 (December-March 2000), available at: http://www.healthlink.org.uk/PDFs/cbrnews32.pdf.

[9] A. Harris and S. Enfield, *Disability, Equality, and Human Rights: A Training Manual for Development and Humanitarian Organisations* (Oxford: Oxfam United Kingdom, 2003).

[10] D. Busher, "Don't overlook people with disabilities in Haiti", *The Huffington Post*, 9 February 2010, available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dale-busher/don't-overslook-people-with_b_455471.htlm.

[11] United Nations, *World Public Sector Report 2010: Reconstructing Public Administration after Conflict: Challenges, Practices and Lessons Learned* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.II.H.1), chap. II.

[12] For further information, see http://www.make-development-inclusive.org/toolsen/pcm1.pdf.

15. While the economic stimulus packages and other crises-concerned measures are short-term responses, they offer opportunities to set the stage for broader and lasting reforms to develop the disability-responsive socio-economic policies and budgeting frameworks. Behind each crisis there exists an opportunity to advance disability-inclusive development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to benefit all members of the society in the long run.

III. Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities

A. Millennium Development Goals and disability

16. From a life-cycle perspective, disability can happen to anyone at any stage of their lifespan. Currently, it is estimated that 1 in every 10 people worldwide lives with one or more disabling conditions. With the global trends in population ageing — persons aged 60 and above are projected to increase from 675 million in 2005 to 1.9 billion in 2050 — the incidence of impairment and disability among the general population is expected to increase. When families and households with persons with disabilities are taken into account, a much larger proportion of population is affected by disability.

17. This universal aspect of disability and its relevance to all populations across national boundaries, generations, socio-economic status and different life stages, require the "disability perspective" to be an integral part of policy design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. It highlights the need for society to invest in environmental inclusiveness and accessibility in terms of plan, design and construction that provide reasonable adaptation in meeting the needs and capacities of all users.

18. Disability is a cross-cutting issue and all the Millennium Development Goals have relevance to disability and persons with disabilities. Although the commitment of the United Nations to the rights of persons with disabilities and their inclusion are implied in all aspects of the Goals, this does not automatically result in their inclusion in either general or targeted Millennium Development Goal efforts.[13]

19. In this context, there is a great need to ensure that all Millennium Development Goal targets and indicators identify, monitor and evaluate the impact of related policies and programming on the situation of persons with disabilities. The primary tools and mechanisms for tracking the Goals must ensure that disability is "visible" in the overall framework used for allocating further funding and resources at the local, national, regional and global levels. The absence of explicit targets for disability in the Goals represents a substantial missed opportunity to achieve "Millennium Development Goals for all, inclusive of persons with disabilities".

20. As outlined below, the eight Goals are directly linked to the advancement of rights of persons with disabilities and their economic and social empowerment. Moreover, inclusion of persons with disabilities and their full and effective

[13] P. Ayora, N. E. Groce and L. C. Kaplan, "Immunization rates among disabled children in Ecuador: unanticipated findings", *Journal of Pediatrics*, vol. 151, No. 2 (August 2007), pp. 218-220.

participation at all stages of development efforts is crucial to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

1. Poverty and hunger

21. The global focus on poverty highlighted by the Millennium Development Goals is of particular concern to persons with disabilities. A growing body of research now shows that the most pressing issue faced by millions of persons with disabilities worldwide is not necessarily their disability but rather poverty. Available data also suggest that persons with disabilities and their households face a higher risk of poverty with fewer resources and more fragile support networks.[14]

22. Focusing only on aggregate results, there is a risk that the first Goal might be achieved by concentrating on the "least poor" or those who are "easiest" to reach, which would leave behind the poorest and most marginalized, in particular persons with disabilities.

2. Education

23. *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2010*[15] indicates that the link between disability and marginalization in education is evident in countries at all levels of development. Even in some countries that are closer to achieving the goal of universal primary education, children with disabilities represent the majority of those who are excluded. The report cited a few countries that had over 90 per cent of net enrolment ratios for children aged 7 to 15 in 2002, whereas 58 per cent for children with disabilities.[15] Estimates indicate that more than one third of out-of-school children have a disability.[16]

3. Gender equality and empowerment of women

24. Women with disabilities face double discrimination on the grounds of both their gender and impairment(s). Gender discrimination in a disability context indicates that women and girls with disabilities are often at greater risk of abuse and violence, injury and neglect.[17] Violence against women can be a significant cause of preventable disability in the first place. In addition to causing injury, violence increases women's long-term risk of several health problems, including physical disability.[18] According to a recent study, violence and abuses against women with disabilities are often hidden, and there remains deep-seated stigma and shame connected to both sexuality and disability.[19]

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[14] Rebecca Yeo, "Chronic poverty and disability", Background Paper, No. 4 (Somerset, United Kingdom, Action on Disability and Development, 2001).

[15] United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2010*, available from http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf.

[16] J. Balescut and K. Eklindh, "Historical perspective on education for persons with disabilities (2006), quoted in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007*, part II, chap. 3.

[17] Paragraph (q) of the preamble to the Convention.

[18] M. Ellsberg and L. Heise, *Researching Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists* (Washington, D.C., United States: WHO, Programme for Appropriate Health Technology, 2005), chap. 1.

[19] Marit Hoem Kvam and Stine Hellum Braathen, "Violence and abuse against women with disabilities in Malawi" A576 Report, SINTEF Health Research (Oslo, 2006).

4. Health

25. Mortality for children with disabilities under five can be as high as 80 per cent even in countries where the average child mortality rate has been reduced to 20 per cent.[20] Several studies show that while some communities have included children with disabilities in outreach efforts, children with disabilities often do not receive standard immunizations and basic "well-child" care even in highly developed countries.[13]

26. Complications during pregnancy and childbirth can cause death and disability among women of reproductive age, claiming over 500,000 lives a year.[21] Women with disabilities face particular challenges in accessing reproductive health education, because they are often considered as sexually inactive.[22]

27. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), HIV can cause disabling conditions, such as blindness, neuropathy and dementia. The infection levels among persons with disabilities are equal to or higher than the rest of the community owing to insufficient access for persons with disabilities to appropriate HIV education, information, prevention and support services (possibly resulting in high HIV-risk behaviours). In addition, a large percentage of persons with disabilities tend to experience sexual violence, which was found as one of the main causes for the high rate of HIV prevalence among them.[23]

5. Environmental sustainability

28. Environmental risks — such as poor sanitation and water quality — can cause health-related disabilities. Conversely, there is an urgent need to make environmental accessibility a top priority for all populations, including persons with disabilities.

B. Mainstreaming disability in existing Millennium Development Goal monitoring, evaluation and indicators[24]

1. Global monitoring mechanism

29. In support of efforts by Governments and civil society to achieve the Goals, at the global, regional and country levels, the United Nations works in four activity areas: (a) monitoring; (b) analysis; (c) awareness-raising campaigning and mobilization; and (d) operational activities.[24] The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators undertakes analysis to monitor

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[20] Department for International Development, *Disability, Poverty and Development* (London, 2000).

[21] UNESCO, *Education for All, Global Monitoring Report 2009, Overcoming Inequality: Why Governance Matters* (Paris, 2009).

[22] J. Maxwell, J. Belses and D. David, *A Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities* (Berkeley, California, United States, Hesperian Foundation, 2007).

[23] WHO, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Policy Brief, April 2009, available at: http://data.unaids/org/pub/Manual/2009/jc1632_policy_brief_disability_en.pdf.

[24] Further information is available from the Export Group Meeting organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the World Health Organization on the topic "Mainstreaming disability in MDG policies, processes and mechanisms: development for all" (Geneva, April 2009), available at: http://un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1469.

progress towards realization of the Goals at the global and regional levels, which plays an important role for inclusion of disability in all Millennium Development Goal processes.

2. Data gaps and disability

30. The existing data gaps on disability within the context of the Millennium Development Goal evaluation and monitoring continues to be a major challenge. This may also be an indication, among other things, of the lack of attention concerning disability in Millennium Development Goal processes. Available data, however, could be used to support the inclusion of disability in current Millennium Development Goal evaluation and monitoring processes, while ongoing and new Millennium Development Goal evaluation and monitoring efforts should add a disability component as part of their overall data collection endeavours.

3. Data collection

31. Some countries have reporting systems that include data on disability, but not all available data reach the international level. Other sources of data include specific case studies or illustrative surveys in a few countries.

32. For example, a fair number of countries have been collecting, in their censuses and surveys, data on education and employment of persons with disabilities. These data can provide information on progress towards target 1B (employment) and target 2A (education). Data on gender differences in education and employment of persons with disabilities can be used to assess progress towards eliminating gender disparities in education and employment (Goal 3). For other aspects of the Goals — such as access to water and sanitation,[25] child and maternal health, and hunger-poverty — the data on persons with disabilities are very scarce or non-existent; case studies can provide some insight into these issues.

4. Inclusion of disability in Millennium Development Goal indicators

33. Focusing on the inclusion of disability in the current indicators would be more effective to promote the inclusion of disability data than proposing any new indicators related to disability. This would require identifying those indicators that could be disaggregated by disability meaningfully, as some indicators may not be disaggregated by disability.

34. Inclusion of disability into the specific Goals could be based on (a) whether the goal is "overarching" — to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and all other goals may be linked to them; and/or (b) the availability of disability disaggregated data. Goals 1, 2 and 3 would meet these two criteria. However, such an approach has some limitations, as available data may not always be adequate to reflect the relevance or importance of an issue. In such a case, when the scope of data and evidence are limited, efforts to identify additional data could be made to bridge the gap.

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[25] Further information is available from "Core concepts of the Millennium Development Goals", online course supplement, at http://www.undg.org/docs/8984/Core-Concepts-of-fMDGs-Manual-April-2008.pdf.

C. Taking action: accessible Millennium Development Goal processes for all

35. The international commitment to "Millennium Development Goals for all" hinges on making the Millennium Development Goal processes and mechanisms truly inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities.

36. Accessibility has been identified by the General Assembly as one of the main priorities in promoting equalization of opportunities[26] and as an essential precondition for effectively addressing the participation of persons with disabilities in Millennium Development Goal processes. Efforts towards the inclusion of the disability perspective, and targeted measures for accessibility need to be an integral part of policy development. Any planning and implementation processes related to the Goals, particularly in the areas of health, nutrition, education, skill development employment, social protection floor, and dissemination of appropriate technologies, should include accessibility at the very beginning of policy and programme design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, to ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

D. Progress and initiatives

1. Member States[27]

37. Governments reported on the percentage of the total population with disabilities on the basis of census, labour force surveys, sample surveys or administrative data. Data on socio-economic indicators was provided by a few countries, such as Malta, which illustrated the relative position of the population with disabilities compared to the total population.

38. Several countries, including Colombia, Luxembourg, Norway and Poland, reported on the development of national strategies to collect data on the situation of persons with disabilities.

39. Other countries, such as the Czech Republic, Montenegro, Nicaragua, Peru, Singapore and Slovenia, developed national plans for action during the past years to achieve key policies to provide services and programmes to persons with disabilities.

40. The inputs received indicate that Member States are increasing their efforts to include persons with disabilities in their development strategies.

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[26] More than 20 resolutions, reiterating the importance of accessibility, have been adopted by the General Assembly since the adoption of the World Programme of Action in 1982. Most recent resolutions include Assembly resolutions 63/150 and 64/131.

[27] Forty-three countries submitted their inputs in response to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs note verbale dated 19 March 2010: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Qatar, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine.

Eradicate poverty

41. Recognizing that employment and decent work is fundamental to alleviating poverty, Bulgaria, Paraguay and the Republic of Korea, among other countries, offer grants and other financial supports for employment of persons with disabilities, while Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic have employment quotas for persons with disabilities. Algeria, Burkina Faso, Georgia, Portugal and Spain offer vocational and employment skills training programmes to promote access to employment for persons with disabilities.

42. Countries also provided examples of efforts to particularly address the needs of the rural poor living with disabilities. China implemented a National Poverty Alleviation and Development Programme that has in the last decade benefited more than 10 million poor persons with disabilities living in rural areas. Malawi assists persons with disabilities through microcredit programmes where farmers with disabilities, among others, are beneficiaries.

43. Other countries such as Argentina, Greece, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Mozambique, Qatar and Ukraine have programmes aimed at improving social security for persons with disabilities who face hardships, which included pension schemes and other social benefits.

Access to primary education

44. The exclusion of children and youth with disabilities from education results in their exclusion from economic opportunities and ultimately their future financial independence. Although two basic streams of education — "mainstream and special" — exist in many countries, increasing emphasis on non-discrimination and equal access to education has seen a transition to greater inclusive education. Belgium and Malta indicate more children with disabilities now attend mainstream schools than ever before.

45. Algeria, Malawi, Mexico, Portugal and Ukraine have developed programmes and educational support materials for children with disabilities, for example, providing textbooks in Braille and audio-visual or other specialized equipment which are either subsidized or provided free of charge. Croatia promotes the continuous professional development of educational workers who work with children and persons with developmental disabilities and offers facilities of mobile expert teams who provide support to teachers and children with disabilities.

Gender equality

46. In general, women and girls with disabilities are more disadvantaged than men and boys with disabilities. In many cases, girls are more likely to be excluded from education, have lower social status and be unemployed, and these negative effects are often compounded because of disability. Some countries included examples of low participation of women with disabilities, particularly in education and employment, and called for more intensive efforts to bridge this gap. One country reported that the gross enrolment rate in primary and secondary education for children with disabilities was 75 per cent while for girls with disabilities alone, the rate was 60 per cent.

47. Using the 2005 census data another country illustrated that women with disabilities compared to men with disabilities are: three times less likely to work;

34 times more likely to stay at home to take care of the household or family; nearly twice as are more likely to live in institutionalized care and, if not in care, they are more likely to live in dwellings in most need of repair. Educational attainment among women with disabilities is also lower, with many leaving school when they complete primary school.

48. Portugal has carried out a study to evaluate the impact of discrimination on women with disabilities, to find solutions in order to prevent discrimination and draw recommendations. Iraq recognizes that children and women with disabilities are subjected to multiple discriminations, and ensures their access to social protection. Overall, only a few countries included women with disabilities as one of the priority target groups in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and other related development projects.

Health

49. The present section covers Goals 4, 5 and 6, focusing on child mortality, maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The inputs from Member States indicate that some progress has been made in recognizing the sexual and reproductive health of persons with disabilities and the introduction of early detection and treatment to reduce disabling conditions.

50. For example, Jamaica conducts educational programmes on the sexual and reproductive health rights of persons with disabilities in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

51. Botswana and Mozambique have programmes in accessible formats on the prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS for persons with disabilities. Croatia reported on an initiative to remove architectural barriers to health-care institutes. Removing physical, attitudinal and information barriers is critical to ensuring equal access to health facilities for persons with disabilities. Removing existing barriers has become a "persistent problem" and many countries have come to recognize the necessity of incorporating accessible and inclusive design at the earliest stages of construction, through the formulation and enforcement of accessibility laws, regulations, technical standards and norms.

2. Disability and development cooperation

52. Over the past few years, there has been growing international recognition of the importance of the disability perspective in reducing poverty. Inputs from Governments indicate that development agencies are increasingly including persons with disabilities in their development activities. For example, the "Development for all" strategy by the Australian Agency for International Development, supports partner Governments in Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea and Samoa towards developing and implementing national disability policies, plans, legislation and coordination mechanisms. The Canadian International Development Agency, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Italian Development Cooperation provided examples of collaboration with partners to implement development programmes to promote participation and integration of persons with disabilities in social and economic development.

53. In addition to the inputs from Members States, other reviews indicate that an increasing number of United Nations agencies, Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and disabled peoples organizations are taking practical action

to include persons with disabilities in the current Millennium Development Goal efforts. These efforts include planning the remaining five years towards the Goals, as well as in forthcoming discussions that will determine the global development framework beyond 2015.

54. In that context, the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2010/6) provides an overview of the status of disability-inclusive development cooperation within the framework of multilateral, regional and bilateral initiatives. For example, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency requires its projects to include persons with disabilities in the estimates of potential impact and evaluation to ensure full and equal participation of persons with disabilities.

55. Both the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union have published guidance notes on disability, providing a practical guide for country offices and delegations to address disability within development work with the explicit recognition that the Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without addressing disability.[28] The African Union and the European Union have developed action points on disability under the Millennium Development Goal areas of health and education in their Joint European Union-Africa Strategy and Action Plan (2008-2009),[29] and have set up a Task Force on Disability to lead WHO efforts in this area.[30] However, accelerated progress is required to strengthen cohesion and coordination among all stakeholders to ensure that disability should be included in international development cooperation.

3. United Nations system

56. In order to advance the agenda for mainstreaming disability into the Millennium Development Goals and other development frameworks, organizations of the United Nations system have taken initiatives and actions, focusing on raising global awareness, promoting policy discourse, supporting regional and national capacity-building and enhancing institutional capability at different levels. Organizations work collaboratively within the system and also partner with Governments, NGOs and organizations of persons with disabilities, as well as academic and other institutions, to foster development to achieve the Goals.

57. The United Nations Secretariat has provided new forums for new and traditional stakeholders to exchange ideas and experience in the field of disability and development, with a view to making further progress towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities. To that end, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized several meetings and discussions along with Governments, international development agencies, civil

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[28] DFID, "How to Note on Disability: Working on Disability in Country Programmes" (2007), further information available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/DisguideDFID.pdf; and European Commission, *Guidance Note on Disability and Development for EU Delegations and Services* (2004), further information available at: http://www.dcdd.nl/data/1049538687593_Guidance%20note%20on%20disability%20030304%20-%20FINAL%20D1256.pdf.

[29] Available from: http://www.eu2007.pt/NR/rdonlyres/D449546C-BF42-4CB3-B566-407591845C43/0/071206jsapenlogos_formatado.pdfhttp://www.dcdd.nl/data/1049538687593_Guidance%20note%20on%20disability%20030304%20-%20FINAL%20D1256.pdf.

[30] See http://www.who.int/disabilities/media/news/taskforce/en/index.html#.

society and other stakeholders. The events, held in conjunction with the sessions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development, as well as the annual commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, contributed to ongoing efforts towards mainstreaming disability in Millennium Development Goal processes and other international development goals in the operational activities of the United Nations at the country levels.[31]

58. In order to support regional capacity-building for mainstreaming disability in development, the Department also participated in the International Forum on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the theme "Utilizing the Convention to mobilize for action", and held a workshop on the topic "Disability, the Millennium Development Goals and gender", in conjunction with the twenty-sixth annual Pacific Rim International Conference, held in Hawaii in April 2010. The outcome of the Forum included a multi-stakeholder declaration for inclusive Millennium Development Goals which called for increased collaborations at all levels to strengthen capacity-building for collection, monitoring and evaluation of disability statistics for the Goals.

59. In partnership with the World Bank, the Leonard Cheshire Centre on Disability (United Kingdom) and the Global Partnership for Disability and Development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs also co-sponsored the meeting of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) on the topic "Inclusion of the disability perspective in the Millennium Development Goals and inclusive development", at the Conference of High-Level Authorities of MERCOSUR, in conjunction with the Presidency of Argentina of MERCOSUR, in Buenos Aires in March 2010. The Department organized a workshop under the theme "Building new communities for advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities in development", as part of its contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals within the framework of the Convention.

60. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights continues to advocate for the adoption of a human rights-based approach to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Within this process, each Millennium Development Goal target and indicator is interpreted in the context of human rights in alignment with the corresponding human rights standards. Furthermore, taking a human rights approach requires that formal or informal discriminatory barriers be removed and active steps be taken to eliminate discrimination in opportunities and minimize unjust disparities in outcomes.

61. The Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, in his statement to the Commission at its forty-eighth session, in February 2010, stated that one of his key priorities includes mainstreaming disability in the Millennium Development Goals.

62. Increasingly, the commitment of the United Nations system to the achievement of persons with disabilities is reflected in the periodic strategic plans. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Strategic Plan 2008-2011 has included persons with disabilities and the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) Strategic Plan 2008-2011 makes explicit reference to women with disabilities. The

[31] Further information on the Millennium Development Goals and disability is available at: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1470.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is pursuing its Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Strategy, which aims at achieving equality for all persons of concern, including persons with disabilities.

63. The International Labour Organization recently conducted a review of Decent Work Country Programmes from a disability perspective. Given the linkage of the Programmes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, it indicated that, of the 90 countries that had a Decent Work Country Programme or a draft Programme, considerable progress had been made in including persons with disabilities.

64. UNFPA supported the drafting of a national strategy on employment and social protection in Armenia, which included a reference to persons with disabilities. UNDP and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population in Uzbekistan jointly launched a project, Accessibility, Civic Consciousness, Employment, and Social Support for persons with disabilities. This initiative was established to improve the social status and opportunities for persons with disabilities, through changing attitudinal and environmental barriers with a view to promoting and supporting their employment.

65. UNESCO published Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education with the aim of assisting countries in strengthening inclusive education in their strategies and plans for education. A related project entitled "Inclusive education in action",[32] initiated in December 2009, draws upon existing knowledge and expertise from key international organizations working on inclusive education to help support national policy cycles for inclusive education.

66. WHO and UNFPA collaborated with the Mongolian National Centre on Mental Health for the provision of psycho-social support to women, young people and family members who are severely affected by a natural disaster called "dzud" that occurs during winter, where livestock and livelihoods are lost. WHO is collaborating with UNICEF in finalizing their Care for Child Development Intervention Package for optimizing child development and preventing development problems for promoting the involvement of the health sector in early childhood development.

67. The UNFPA global Campaign to End Fistula that began in 2003 with 12 countries has now grown to 45 countries. More than 28 countries have included programmes targeting obstetric fistula in at least one national policy and more than 10 countries have developed national fistula strategies. Furthermore, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the capacity for treatment of fistula has increased by more than double from 2008 to 2009, with almost 1,000 women receiving treatment in 2009.

68. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), OHCHR and WHO launched a new policy brief on disability and HIV. The brief, developed in consultation with persons living with HIV and persons with disabilities, discusses the actions needed to increase the participation of persons with disabilities in the HIV response and ensures that they have access to HIV services on an equal basis with others.

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[32] UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the Marginalized* (Paris, 2010).

69. The Task Team of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/United Nations Development Group has developed a draft guidance note on disability for the United Nations country teams with a view to promoting the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the United Nations programming at the country level.

4. Civil society

70. Civil society initiatives cover a wide array of activities and strategies to support the intergovernmental process and the work of the United Nations. Individual and collaborative work ranges from comprehensive programmes and projects to awareness-raising activities at the national, regional and international levels, as well as working with Governments towards the ratification and implementation of the Convention and towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities. Below are two examples of the work of NGOs and organizations of persons with disabilities towards achievement of the Goals for persons with disabilities.

71. The International Disability Alliance, a global network of 12 international and regional organizations of persons with disabilities, has member organizations worldwide. Through its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Forum, the Alliance brings together a range of organizations to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, exchange ideas, generate support and promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities.

72. The International Disability and Development Consortium[33] launched its campaign to promote "disability-inclusive Millennium Development Goals" in 2008, with support from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Millennium Campaign, and continues to draw attention to disability and the Goals, including the need to adjust indicators to incorporate persons with disabilities, accessibility and inclusion criteria.

5. Multi-stakeholder partnership

73. The Global Partnership for Disability and Development, a global alliance of Governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, United Nations system agencies, disabled people's organizations, and development organizations, held a series of meetings and activities to promote the inclusion of disability in the Millennium Development Goals and to build on its awareness-raising campaign in collaboration with civil society organizations.

74. For example, the Partnership organized an expert meeting on indicators for the inclusive monitoring of poverty reduction and development programmes in Maputo, in March 2010. The meeting developed strategies for strengthening disability data collection and discussed national monitoring of Millennium Development Goal processes.

[33] Further information is available at www.includeeverybody.org.

IV. Updates of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons

75. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 62/127 and 63/150 and on realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities, recognized the synergies and complementarities of the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules and the Convention. The Assembly, in this connection, requested updates of the World Programme of Action in order to strengthen the international normative framework in line with the Convention to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities.

76. In line with the Convention, the World Programme of Action as well as the Standard Rules play critical roles in supporting comprehensive and coherent policy development concerning the participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of economic and social development. These instruments are tools for strengthening legal protection, policymaking and planning for development and operate at various levels and take on varying degrees of normativity.[34] At the international level, these instruments may be utilized to support disability-inclusive policies and practices. At the national level, they may be used to support the harmonization of domestic legislation, policies and programmes.

77. The World Programme of Action focuses on planning and strategic implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and its updates would provide a basis for monitoring of the relevant provisions in the Convention. This option would create a proactive response to Millennium Development Goal monitoring and evaluation related to internationally agreed development goals, including Millennium Development Goal processes as well as to treaty obligations at a national level. It would also emphasize the need for dialogue for disability policies and programmes as a means to encourage and manage monitoring and evaluation for disability-inclusive Millennium Development Goal processes, and develop capacity to promote the rights of persons with disability in line with the Convention. The prime importance of implementation rests with planning and accountability at the national level and the role of national NGOs.

78. In their responses to the note verbale, many Governments indicated that any updating of the World Programme of Action should be guided by the principles and objectives of the Convention as well as by the international norms and standards in both development and human rights domains. Some Governments emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation in terms of the impact on individuals and families, including, inter alia, in relation to poverty, employment and participation in political and cultural life.

79. Several Governments expressed the view that the World Programme of Action, based on its universal acceptance as a strategic policy guide, provides options for formulating disability policies and programmes and its terminology, paradigms and concepts are useful for developing national and regional strategies.

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[34] Further information is available in the report of the Secretary-General entitled, "Fifth quinquennial review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons" (A/63/183).

80. Specific issues that may be included in updating of the World Programme of Action are:

- Reviewing and updating of emerging issues concerning prevention
- Incorporating the perspective of women, children, indigenous, displaced and migrants with disabilities
- Strengthening multilateral development cooperation to mainstream disability and ensuring that all sectors of development are inclusive of the disability perspective so that persons with disabilities are agents and beneficiaries in development planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation
- Ensuring attention to the gender perspective, including the private sphere, such as family relations, personal autonomy and domestic violence, in particular
- Raising awareness and building capacity of all stakeholders — both traditional and non-traditional — in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

81. Options for updates of the World Programme are further detailed in annex I to the present report.

V. Disability data and statistics

82. Data on disability are still a challenge for global monitoring because global figures on persons with disabilities are not yet readily available and baseline data for many development issues are scarce or non-existent. Despite the progress made, the paucity of data on disability as well as a wide variance of definitions, standards and methodologies used to identify the conditions of persons with and without disabilities remain an obstacle to the effective formulation of disability-inclusive policies and programmes and in the monitoring and evaluation of progress in the Millennium Development Goals.

83. The lack of data on persons with disabilities for Millennium Development Goal indicators may allow for progress towards the Goals to occur overall, but can mask a lack of progress or even a worsening of conditions for persons with disabilities. This is because national progress towards the MDGs can be made without changing the situation of the persons with disabilities. Disaggregated Millennium Development Goal indicators are needed to prevent this from happening.[35]

84. There is an urgent need for improved statistical data concerning the situation of persons with disabilities in crisis to develop benchmarks for including disability in the crisis-related responses and also to ensure the equalization of distribution of the benefits produced by increased attention to food and energy security and related pro-poor policies.

[35] *Claiming the Millennium Development Goals: a Human Rights Approach* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIV.6), available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Claiming_MDGs_en.pdf.

A. Using statistics to integrate a disability perspective in the Millennium Development Goals

85. Several Member States are in the process of integrating the disability perspective in Millennium Development Goal monitoring and evaluation. For example, Argentina has included 20 disability-specific indicators in its national Millennium Development Goal implementation and monitoring system to cover a wide range of areas corresponding to Goals 1, 2, 3, 7 and 9. Argentina is in the process of creating a database on the situation of persons with disabilities using sources from various agencies and its National Statistical System. Similar initiatives were also reported by other countries.

B. Collecting data and statistics on disability

86. As of April 2010, 87 censuses were conducted by Member States as part of the 2010 round.[36] Among them, 70 census questionnaires were received and reviewed by the United Nations Statistics Division for their topical content. Of the 70 censuses reviewed, 44 are identified as including disability questions, and 43 utilized the core set of disability questions recommended in the Principles and Recommendations.

C. Capacity-building

87. The United Nations system is supporting the development of statistics on disability, through providing training workshops and consultations to national statistics offices and developing technical guidelines for disability-related questions in censuses and sample surveys. WHO is working on 15 sets of indicators that can be used to monitor and evaluate the enjoyment of rights by children with disabilities. UNFPA supported Viet Nam and India for the national census and survey that included questions on disability. The World Bank is strengthening its knowledge management on disability and promoting capacity-building in countries to respond to the needs for monitoring and evaluation of progress made in the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in development.

88. At the regional level, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is promoting the capacity-building of all stakeholders for monitoring and evaluation of progress in the Second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012).[37] ESCAP supported the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam in integrating International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health-based disability questions in their censuses. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), through its Africa Centre for Statistics, supported African countries collecting data on persons with disabilities during household survey and decennial censuses statistical standards, especially in preparing a regional report on monitoring the implementation of the Arab Decade for Persons with Disabilities (2004-2013).

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[36] The ongoing 2010 census round is from 2005 until the end of 2014. It is expected that more censuses will be conducted before 2014.

[37] Report of the Expert Group Meeting-cum-Stakeholder Consultation to Review the Implementation of the Asian-Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012), Bangkok, 23-25 June 2010. The report provides a comprehensive regional framework for mainstreaming disability in the development agenda, including the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

D. Next steps

89. Improvements have been made in the development of disability statistics through actions taken at the national, regional and global levels. Actions taken thus far support the goal of mainstreaming disability data into official statistics, and these actions also support the reporting of disability data to the United Nations in a standardized format while using internationally agreed classifications, definitions, concepts and survey standards for data collection.

90. However, much remains to be done to ensure that the data collection is done on a more regular basis. There exists a need for analysis, dissemination and use of disability statistics to produce indicators useful for monitoring and evaluating progress made in achieving the common goals and objectives of the World Programme of Action, the Convention, the Standard Rules as well as the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

91. In 2010, a series of meetings and consultations, in preparation for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, have been held at the United Nations to review the progress and identify the continuing gaps in the global efforts towards realization of the Millennium Development Goals for all. This is a critical juncture for ensuring disability is included in the remaining five years of activities in the existing Millennium Development Goal processes.

92. The international community over the past decade has made historic progress in disability-inclusive development through its adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. As a result of this groundbreaking achievement, national planning has begun for the implementation of programmes and policies in support of this effort, which includes developing policy and legislation to protect the human rights of persons with disabilities, and mainstreaming into official statistics in support of monitoring and evaluation of the goals of the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules.

93. To make development more equitable, effective and efficient by bridging the existing gap between commitment and practice, there is a need to translate the common goals, objectives and principles of the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules into cohesive national action that incorporates the disability perspective into development policies, programmes and relevant projects and activities.

94. In order to achieve this goal, increased support is needed to further strengthen national and international statistical capacity in the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme and beyond, while also working to strengthen national capacity in the compiling and reporting of disability statistics provided by the Census Programme.

95. There is a great potential for the global disability community to be part of the discussions that will shape the global development agenda from 2015 and beyond. A vibrant and experienced network of disabled persons organizations can play a key

role in promoting the inclusion of disability in all the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

96. It is also vital to accelerate the capacity-building of all key stakeholders, in particular, United Nations Resident Coordinators and the field staff in country-level operations, in mainstreaming disability in the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals as well as other internationally agreed development goals. In that context, existing regional and subregional entities within and outside the United Nations system, such as the regional commissions, regional development banks as well as other relevant intergovernmental organizations, should be more effectively utilized.

B. Recommendations

97. There are three internationally agreed frameworks for including disability in Millennium Development Goal processes: (a) the international normative framework on disability, consisting of the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules; (b) disability-inclusive implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Goals within the existing Millennium Development Goal framework; and (c) improved disability data and statistics within the existing statistical framework based on the internationally agreed policies, standards and methodologies. In order to advance the disability-inclusive Millennium Development Goals towards 2015 and beyond, a holistic approach is needed to bring synergy among all three frameworks.

98. Short-term, medium-term and long-term disability strategies should be developed for the inclusion of disability concerns into the Millennium Development Goals over the remaining five years (2010-2015) and beyond 2015, across United Nations organizations, Governments and civil society, in close consultation with disability organizations and other stakeholders.

99. Millennium Development Goal core strategies should include disability with an emphasis on the equalization of opportunities and support the collection of accurate and reliable data and comprehensive analysis on disability and the situation of persons with disabilities in economic and social development. Awareness of and sensitivity towards disability should be included in all operational activities, and in all United Nations Millennium Campaign efforts towards 2015 and beyond.

100. Millennium Development Goal processes should include disability as a means to ensure that persons with or without disabilities have equal access to the social protection floor and programmes, including those related to combating the current global crisis.

101. Stakeholders should develop an overall strategy and policy, incorporating the gender perspective into policies and programmes on disability, and the disability perspective in policymaking and programme development for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals.

102. Community-based rehabilitation, a community-based strategic framework, can be used as an important vehicle for participation of persons with disabilities in Millennium Development Goal processes, particularly in rural areas.

Specific recommendation 1. Improve data and statistics on disability

Monitoring and evaluation of Millennium Development Goal indicators

103. Within the existing Millennium Development Goal framework, selected indicators should be disaggregated for their comparisons of persons with and without disabilities since including disability in the current indicators would be a more effective means of inclusion than proposing new indicators. This would require identifying those indicators that could be disaggregated according to disabilities.

104. Although the existing data gaps on disability within the context of the Millennium Development Goal evaluation and monitoring continues to be a major challenge, available data should be used to support the inclusion of disability in the current Millennium Development Goal evaluation and monitoring processes, while ongoing and new evaluation and monitoring efforts should add a disability component as part of their overall data-collection efforts.

Disability data and statistics

105. The General Assembly may wish to encourage the use by Member States of existing technical tools of the United Nations, such as the *Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics*,[38] in order to improve the availability of disability statistics in an internationally comparable manner.

106. In the light of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, which would span from 2005 to 2014, the General Assembly may wish to reiterate the importance of supporting and enhancing the collection of disability statistics using the recommendations provided in the United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*.[39] In that regard, more importance should be attached by Member States to the preparation of relevant census tabulations.

107. In the light of the need for data on the Millennium Development Goals, particular attention should be paid by the Statistical Commission and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to further improve standards and methods for both collecting and presenting statistical information on important census and survey topics related to the participation of persons with and without disabilities, including those of the environment and accessibility to socio-economic development.

Specific recommendation 2. Ensure accessibility in all aspects of Millennium Development Goal processes

108. All stakeholders should recognize accessibility as the basis for realizing the Millennium Development Goals for all and take concrete measures to promote accessibility with reasonable accommodation, in both the physical environment as well as in the fields of information and communications technologies.

109. The accessibility of the United Nations should be improved in the context of the overall work through the coordination of actions of the United Nations on the Millennium Development Goals in order to make such processes and information

[38] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.XVII.15.

[39] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XVII.8.

available in accessible formats to persons with disabilities, with particular attention to persons with disabilities living in poverty and rural areas.

110. More effective use should be made of the media to disseminate information and raise public awareness about disability, accessibility and the Millennium Development Goals.

Specific recommendation 3. Ensure equal participation and empowerment of persons with disabilities in all aspects of Millennium Development Goal processes

111. Member States should take measures to enable persons with disabilities and disabled persons organizations to effectively participate as both agents and beneficiaries of development in all policymaking and implementation processes for the Millennium Development Goals.

112. Participatory and accountable institutions should be developed to promote and monitor the advancement of the inclusion of disability and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities.

113. Capacity-building and partnerships should be accelerated among all stakeholders — Governments, disability organizations and other civil society organizations, academic institutions, legal experts and practitioners — in order to devise effective strategies for the inclusion of disability in Millennium Development Goal processes.

Annex I

Options for updates of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons

I. Background

1. The present annex was prepared in response to the request contained in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 63/150 and addresses the following: updates to the World Programme of Action; and recommendations to advance the World Programme and other international norms and standards relating to disability in the light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

II. Options to advance synergies and promote alignment of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and other disability-specific instruments in the light of the Convention

2. In 2006, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, marking the culmination of many years of work in the development of international norms and standards on disability. The progressive development of international disability standards included, among others, the adoption of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons in 1982 and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in 1993.

3. The three disability-specific instruments afford ample opportunity to advance the realization of human rights for all persons with disabilities and these mandates should be pursued in keeping with the comprehensive human rights approach and general principles of the Convention.

4. Taking into account the current situation of persons with disabilities and developments in the global policy framework regarding persons with disabilities, especially the adoption of the Convention providing comprehensive coverage of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities, consideration should be given to updating the World Programme of Action to reflect the holistic and comprehensive human rights approach set forth in the Convention.

5. The World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules emphasize the right of persons with disabilities to the same opportunities as other citizens and to an equal share in the improvements in living conditions resulting from economic and social development. The World Programme could be updated in order to more fully reflect the core principles that animate the current international disability rights framework as reflected in article 3 of the Convention, including: respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy, freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons; full and effective participation and inclusion in society; respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity; equality of opportunity; accessibility; equality between men and women; and respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

6. In order to achieve greater alignment with prevailing framings of disability, in particular the stated human rights-oriented goal of the Convention in article 1, consideration should be given to amplifying the statement of purpose in the World Programme of Action, as well as the definition of key terms. Updating in this regard could better reflect the paradigm shift embodied in the Convention as well as its terms, language and comprehensive human rights approach. Such revision should reflect the goal of promoting, protecting and respecting the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, together with the promotion of respect for their inherent dignity. A core component of such revision should include a clear reflection of the understanding of disability as an evolving concept and the perspective that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, consistent with the Convention.

7. In updating the World Programme of Action in alignment with the Convention, a holistic understanding of the human rights of persons with disabilities can be achieved. For instance, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability and the obligation to organize, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes for persons with disabilities are framed as specific substantive obligations to be pursued as part of the comprehensive fulfilment of the human rights of persons with disabilities and in keeping with the principles of non-discrimination, autonomy, independent and full participation. The re-articulation of health and rehabilitation, including prevention programming that corresponds to and incorporates the right to health for all, could constitute an important component of updating the World Programme of Action.

8. Evoking ideas inherent in the social model of understanding of disability, the World Programme of Action notes that equalization of opportunities requires measures that address barriers in the environment. The goal of equalizing opportunities for persons with disabilities is elaborated in the World Programme of Action in paragraphs 108 to 138 under thematic headings that include: legislation; physical environment; income maintenance and social security; education and training; employment; recreation; culture; religion; and sports. Consideration should be given to the expansion of the World Programme of Action to incorporate and/or reference thematic areas not covered in its original iteration, and taking into account the human rights issues enumerated in the Convention, including: article 12, Equal recognition before the law; article 13, Access to justice; article 14, Liberty and security of the person; article 15, Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; article 16, Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse; article 17, Protecting the integrity of the person; article 18, Liberty of movement and nationality; article 19, Living independently and being included in the community; article 20, Personal mobility; article 21, Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information; article 22, Respect for privacy; article 23, Respect for home and the family; and article 29, Participation in political and public life.

9. The World Programme of Action strategically references work that could be advanced at the national level, including programme evaluation and the collection of disability data and statistics. An updating of the World Programme could include specific references to the development and implementation of national disability action plans and the inclusion of disability in national human rights action plans.

Further and expanded reference could be made to the collection of appropriate information, including statistical research and data, consistent with article 31 of the Convention. In order to promote synergies between the World Programme and other international instruments on disability, human rights and development, including the Standard Rules and the Convention, the coordination of work among and between different monitoring mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, may be facilitated and reflected in updating of the World Programme.

10. The foregoing section provides an indication of measures that can be taken at the international level to facilitate updating of the World Programme of Action. The section that follows sets forth practical measures that may be taken for updating the World Programme as well as for implementation of the Convention. It consists of options and recommendations for practical actions to advance synergies and promote alignment of international norms and standards on disability in the light of the Convention.

III. Recommendations for practical actions to advance synergies and promote alignment of international norms and standards on disability in the light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

A. Development, revision and implementation of norms and standards on disability

11. The development, revision and implementation of international norms and standards on disability, all of which should be understood as an ongoing process, may be initiated from different sectors, including Government, from civil society or as a result of international cooperation. Whatever the initial stimulus, and in respect of any component of disability law development, reform or implementation, the process should be inclusive of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations from the outset, in keeping with the principle of participation as reflected in article 3 of the Convention.

12. Guidance should be provided on the inclusion of the principles and goals of the Convention in any revision of the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules or in the development of domestic disability law and policy.

13. In the consultation processes that occur in the context of the development, revision and implementation of domestic norms and standards on disability, the following could be addressed:

- The situation of persons with disabilities in the country
- The existing legal framework for ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities, whether by constitution or by legislation
- The need for law and policy reform in the light of the Convention
- Current mechanisms within and independent of Government to investigate allegations of human rights violations against persons with disabilities, and provide education and disability rights promotion

- The existence of national bodies and mechanisms with the mandate to monitor the rights of persons with disabilities
- Adequacy of resources to ensure implementation of the World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention and compliance with monitoring procedures.

14. The consultation process in any aspect of implementation should ensure effective participation by persons with disabilities subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination and those who require more intensive support, in keeping with the revised World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention, preamble (j) and (p).

15. In the light of overall national consultation processes throughout the course of implementation, the Government should prepare recommendations regarding the needs for law and policy change in order to conform to the revised World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention. Such screening exercises should be comprehensive and undertaken with the knowledge that disability law and policy is cross-cutting and implicated across sectors.

16. In all disability law, policy and programming initiatives, States should allocate sufficient resources to ensure that an effective consultation process concerning implementation of international norms and standards on disability, consistent with the Convention, can take place.

B. Publicity and dissemination of international norms and standards on disability

17. There should be wide dissemination of international norms and standards on disability, in accessible formats in keeping with article 49 of the Convention, within relevant agencies of Government and major interested groups, including disabled persons organizations, NGOs, political parties, the judiciary and academic and other educational institutions.

18. Effective use of the media should be made in obtaining the views of members of the public. This is particularly important in large and geographically dispersed countries. The Internet, radio and television should be used to disseminate information about national planning for action based on the revised World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules, in line with the Convention, and processes of implementation and to obtain input from the public. Consideration must be given to accessibility, to ensure that all sectors of the disability community have the opportunity to receive information and provide inputs on implementation, in keeping with articles 9 and 49 of the Convention.

C. Coordination in support of disability law, policy and programming

19. The coordination of the work on the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules should be pursued in conjunction with implementation strategies for the Millennium Development Goals as they aim to further include disability and persons with disabilities.

20. Technical assistance should be provided to States as they should consider the establishment or designation of a coordination mechanism within Government to facilitate action in support of disability law and policy in different sectors and at different levels, in keeping with the spirit of coordination reflected in article 33, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

21. Coordination of action in respect of international norms and standards on disability law and policy should include coordination between States and relevant intergovernmental organizations and between regional integration organizations. Where States and regional integration organizations share competences, coordination and consultation is especially important.

D. Inclusion of disability in national mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of progress in advancement of persons with disabilities in development

22. Governments should, in accordance with their legal and administrative systems, maintain, strengthen, designate or establish a framework, including one or more independent mechanisms such as a national disability rights council or national human rights commission, to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the revised World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention, in accordance with article 33, paragraph 2, of the Convention. Adequate resources should be provided for effective monitoring pursuant to article 33 of the Convention, including ensuring that disabled persons organizations are involved and participating fully in the monitoring process in accordance with article 33, paragraph 3, of the Convention. In particular, there should be sufficient resources to enable the Government to undertake a comprehensive public information and education campaign to ensure broad knowledge and understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities.

E. Formulation of disability-inclusive national development plans and disability-specific national action plans for the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities

23. International norms and standards on disability should be utilized to support and to guide the development of national disability rights action plans and/or to ensure comprehensive coverage of disability rights issues in any action plan on human rights and development. Such plans, whether disability-specific or pertaining to human rights more generally, should set out a strategy of action that includes specific steps, with timelines and concrete objectives, to improve the protection and promotion of human rights in a particular country. A plan should be country-specific and accordingly, it should address the particular needs of the country in question. Responsibility for the plan is a role for Government; however, it is essential that other stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, their representative organizations, NGOs, the media and the general public be engaged in the process. Baseline assessments, a core component of national human rights action planning, should include an overview of a country's disability legal and institutional framework for the protection of disability rights, social indicators relevant to disability rights, review of disability rights priorities and challenges, including coverage of the human rights situation of persons with disabilities.

F. Facilitation of information collection, analysis and exchange

24. Collection, analysis and exchange of relevant short-term and long-term data and information should be integrated and coordinated to advance the implementation of the human rights of persons with disabilities in development. To that end, the following activities may be pursued.

25. Measures should be taken to facilitate and strengthen the functioning of the global network of institutions and facilities for the collection, analysis and exchange of information, as well as for systematic observation at all levels, which shall, inter alia:

- Ensure that the collection, analysis and exchange of information addresses the needs of local communities of persons with disabilities and those of decision makers, with a view to resolving specific problems, and that local communities are involved in these activities
- Support and further develop bilateral and multilateral programmes and projects aimed at defining, conducting, assessing and financing the collection, analysis and exchange of disability data and information, including, inter alia, integrated sets of disability indicators
- Make full use of the expertise of competent intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including experts with disabilities and disabled persons organizations, particularly to disseminate relevant information and experiences regarding the implementation of international norms and standards on disability among target groups in different regions
- Give full weight to the collection, analysis and exchange of disability data in order to advance the implementation of international norms and standards on disability, bearing in mind article 31 of the Convention
- Exchange and make fully and promptly available information from all publicly available sources relevant to advancing implementation of international norms and standards on disability and mitigating the effects of disability discrimination.

G. Promotion of disability education, training and public awareness

26. The promotion of disability rights education, training and public awareness is a core component of the successful implementation of international norms and standards on disability and is underscored in article 9 of the Convention. To this end, the following activities should be undertaken:

(a) **Promote and facilitate at the national and, as appropriate, subregional and regional levels, and in accordance with national laws and regulations, and within their respective capacities:**

- Development and implementation of educational and public awareness programmes on the Convention
- Public access to information on the Convention
- Public participation in addressing the Convention

- Training of scientific, technical and managerial personnel engaged in disability law and policy implementation.

(b) **Cooperate in and promote, using existing bodies at the international level, and where appropriate:**

- The development and exchange of educational and public awareness material on disability rights
- The development and implementation of education and training programmes, including the strengthening of national institutions and the exchange or secondment of personnel to train experts in disability rights, in particular for developing countries
- Holding regional conferences on advancement on the human rights of persons with disabilities in development and incorporating a vigorous capacity-building component into all such conferences, addressing various levels of expertise
- Encourage and assist in convening regional conferences on the revised World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules and the Convention, ensuring that disabled persons organizations, Government officials, legislators, researchers, academics and others have a meaningful role.

27. In all efforts to facilitate the promotion of disability rights education, training and public awareness, it is important to facilitate the active participation of persons with different disabilities, women, indigenous peoples or older persons, and other groups. In addition, it is important to engage all monitoring mechanisms relating to disability, including the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in the above-mentioned dialogues.

Annex II

Further development and use of disability statistics in support of inclusive monitoring and evaluation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

1. The present annex summarizes progress made and recommends further actions to strengthen disability statistics for monitoring and evaluating progress made in implementation of the international norms and standards relating to disability and development in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disability-inclusive development and the achievement of international development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals, is best served by a statistical system that focuses upon the assessment of equalization of opportunities in line with the common goals and objectives of the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules. The paucity of disability statistics among Millennium Development Goal indicators remains as an obstacle impeding the realization of the Goals for persons with disabilities. Although, the recent progress achieved in disability statistics supports the development of disability-specific Millennium Development Goal indicators that could potentially be mainstreamed into official statistics, some aspects of the internationally agreed statistical system relevant to disability still remain a challenge in implementing and monitoring the Goals.

2. It may also be noted that, in this context, disaggregating the data, based on the current Millennium Development Goal indicators for persons with disabilities as well as other data sources, should also provide an immediate basis for analysis and reporting on the situation of persons with disabilities in Millennium Development Goal national monitoring and evaluation.

3. International agreements reached to improve the comparability, validity and reliability of disability statistics include: (a) *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*,[a] which state clearly and unambiguously the recommendations for inclusion of disability characteristics as a census topic; (b) the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, which provides a unified standard for definitions, concepts and classifications; and (c) the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which aim to ensure validity and reliability of data and its interpretation.

4. In the United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*, it is stated that "The assessment of equalization of opportunity is the purpose that can be best achieved in a census". The *Principles and Recommendations* also state that the census is an important source of data on persons with disabilities. Census data also help to monitor the social and living conditions of persons with disabilities in terms of school attendance, educational attainment, employment, marital status and living arrangements. In addition, census data provide a basis for developing and evaluating policies and programmes to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

[a] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XVII.8.

5. The United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*, describes how census data may be used to produce a number of Millennium Development Goal indicators. However, it is recognized that all the sources of data, such as census, sample surveys and administrative registers, are needed to fulfil the many data requirements for the Millennium Development Goals.

6. Based on existing agreements, Millennium Development Goal indicators that could potentially be derived from census data include: (a) the literacy rate of young people 15-24 years old; (b) ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old; (c) share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; (d) unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 years, each sex and total. Each of these indicators is potentially relevant and useful for comparisons of persons with and without disabilities and already has recommended tabulations or additional tabulations in the *Principles and Recommendations* that could be utilized to produce disability statistics relevant to these topics.[b]

7. The United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* database houses the 2010 round of internationally agreed data from the World Population and Housing Census Programme and related sample surveys and administrative registers. At its thirty-fourth session, in 2003, the United Nations Statistical Commission emphasized the need to ensure the collection of internationally comparable statistics and approved the collection of disability statistics on a regular basis through the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* system using the Questionnaire on Human Functioning and Disability Statistics.

8. Since then, the *Demographic Yearbook* system collected national disability data through the Questionnaire, which compiles information that can be used to assess the extent to which international agreements regarding disability statistics are implemented by Member States. This is done through a common set of metadata useful also for monitoring progress towards the common goals and objectives of the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules. The Questionnaire also sets the format for Member States to report disability statistics produced by censuses, sample surveys and administrative registers to the United Nations, including statistics on the demographic, economic and educational characteristics of persons with disabilities. In 2005, 45 Member States reported their national disability statistics and they were compiled into the *Demographic Yearbook* database.

9. The Statistical Commission, at its thirty-third session, welcomed the formation of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics as a city group and endorsed its programme, noting: (a) the need for standard instruments and comparable indicators on disability; (b) the relevance of its work to the wider area of social integration and exclusion; (c) the importance of validating and reconciling data collected by different organizations. The Washington Group aims to develop a standardized approach to monitor the implementation of the international instruments relating to disability, including the Convention, the World Programme of Action and the Standard Rules, by assessing equalization of opportunities through the use of general disability measures. Member States have been encouraged to support this work, and to use the *Demographic Yearbook* system and the Questionnaire on

[b] Ibid., para. 3-124, table 4.

Human Functioning and Disability Statistics as a means of further strengthening and mainstreaming the reporting and analysis of disability into the monitoring of broad development goals.

10. The key challenges identified in existing disability statistics may include:

- Many countries have not done one of the following: (a) to include a question on disability in census or collect disability statistics through other means; (b) to produce census tabulations; (c) to disseminate the results; or (d) to report the results in a standardized way to the United Nations
- In the light of the great need for disability data for monitoring the World Programme of Action and development goals, national capacity to report disability statistics needs strengthening. International agreements in the Principles and Recommendations of Population and Housing Censuses provided recommended tabulations for the reporting of statistics on persons with and without disabilities.

11. The following key components would provide a strong foundation for meeting with the requirements for disability statistics collection. The collection of disability data and statistics and their dissemination at the national and international level should be completed and strengthened. In addition, the use of national datasets by planners and policymakers for the analysis and preparation of in-depth reports on the situation of persons with disabilities needs to be expanded to meet objectives of policies and programmes. National data on disability should be collected by Member States, following international agreements on standards for statistics and indicators regarding censuses, sample surveys and the administration of civil registration systems, relying on an agreed reporting format such as that provided by the *Demographic Yearbook* system.

Conclusions

12. Member States are encouraged to complete their 2010 round of population and housing censuses and to report their results to the United Nations in internationally agreed formats for dissemination. For Member States that have already developed a national set of disability statistics in their censuses, sample surveys and administrative recording systems should report their results using the international agreements on standards for statistics and indicators. The periodic statistical information submitted by the Member States should be used to assess the progress, through the established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, in implementation of the Convention, the World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules as well as the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

13. Countries that have used census questions concerning disability without producing their census tabulations, or disseminating the results, should do so. Further technical assistance should be made available to countries, especially developing countries in their efforts to strengthen capacity-building through training of national statistics offices to conduct effective population and housing censuses and related sample surveys and administrative registers. In this context, Member States are strongly encouraged to use: (a) the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*; and (b) the work of the Washington

Group on Disability Statistics supported by the Statistical Commission for the planning of disability statistics.

14. It is strongly encouraged that periodic reports should be submitted through appropriate reporting mechanisms within the United Nations to promote the use of existing disability statistics, such as in a series of analytical briefs, with a view to contributing to the common goals of the Convention, the World Programme of Action, the Standard Rules as well as the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.